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ABSTRACT

This publication describes the Midwestern Higher Education Commission and its programs, lists its commissioners and reproduces the compact that established it. A description of the commission notes that its member states are Illinois, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, Ohio, and Wisconsin; and that it is an instrument of the collective member states with a mission to improve higher education opportunities and services in the midwest region. The commission works to accomplish this mission through cooperative interstate initiatives led by program committees comprised of state institutional leaders. Commission programs described include projects in telecommunications (including the Virtual Private Telecommunications Network, and the Interactive Video Program), student exchange (Midwest Student Exchange Program), risk management (Master Property Program, an insurance offering), minority faculty development, women in higher education, academic scheduling software, academic position networks, and future directions. A list groups commissioners by state and offers the address, telephone number, and fax number of each. The text of the Midwestern Regional Education Compact which established the commission is included as is a discussion of education compacts in general and the work of three other regional education compacts in the South, the West, and New England. (JB)

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ED 382 133

MHEC

ADVANCING EDUCATION THROUGH COOPERATION

MISSION, GOALS AND PROGRAMS

of the

Midwestern Higher Education Commission

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

December 1994

HE 028 334

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

The Midwestern Higher Education Commission is a nonprofit regional organization established by compact statute to assist midwestern states in advancing higher education through interstate cooperation and resource sharing. Member states are:

Illinois	Missouri
Kansas	Nebraska
Michigan	Ohio
Minnesota	Wisconsin

MHEC seeks to fulfill its interstate mission through programs which:

- produce administrative cost savings benefits for post secondary education
- encourage student access and affordability
- support public policy analysis and information exchange
- facilitate regional academic cooperation
- encourage quality management and services in higher education
- promote industry/higher education innovation

December 1994
Midwestern Higher Education Commission
1300 South Second Street, Suite 130
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THE MIDWESTERN HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION

The Midwestern Higher Education Commission (MHEC) was established in 1991, by the Midwestern Regional Education Compact, an interstate statutory agreement among several states. Compact members are: Illinois, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, Ohio, and Wisconsin. Eligible non-member states are: Indiana, Iowa, North Dakota, and South Dakota.

The Commission is an instrumentality of the collective member states. Its mission is to improve higher education opportunities and services in the midwest region. MHEC works to accomplish this mission through a variety of cooperative interstate initiatives led by program committees comprised of state and institutional leaders. MHEC is not a coordinating body or control agency. It does not assert authority over the educational policies of individual states or institutions. Participation in MHEC programs is voluntary, and is open to all public and private non profit institutions of postsecondary education in member states.

The Commission membership is composed of five Commissioners from each member state.

The Governor or the Governor's designee,
Two legislators - one from each chamber, except in Nebraska which has two senators from its unicameral legislature
One person from the field of education, and
One at-large member.

The Compact stipulates that each state provide state appropriations, equally apportioned among the states to support the Commission's program activities. The current appropriations are $58,000 per state. MHEC programs include activities to produce administrative cost savings that benefit higher education, expand student access, support public policy development through analysis and information exchange, facilitate regional cooperative academic programming, encourage quality management and promote innovation through industry/higher education cooperation. MHEC programs serve both the public and independent sectors of higher education in member states; namely, community colleges, technical colleges & institutes, independent colleges, state colleges, comprehensive universities, land grant institutions and research universities.

COMMISSION PROGRAMS

Telecommunications: Since its inception in 1992, the MHEC Telecommunications Committee has developed and implemented two important regional initiatives in response to institutional requests: **The Virtual Private Telecommunications Network (VPN), and the Interactive Video Program**. The network provides low cost interstate voice, data, and interactive video communications. It includes on-net connections with more than 200 colleges and universities outside the midwest region, and provides fiber optic, digitally compressed telecommunications technology to participating institutions and state agencies. The network is also capable of transmitting digitally compressed video in support of interstate distance learning activities. The network is maintained through an umbrella agreement with Sprint Corporation as part of a MHEC/Sprint Program Offering that includes a comprehensive menu of services available to institutions and state agencies in member states.

The Interactive Video Program provides information on video transmission standards, equipment capabilities, room design configurations, systems integration services, and contract maintenance features needed to support interstate and/or networked video exchanges among institutions for purposes of distance education. Through regionally negotiated volume pricing agreements with Norstan Corporation and BT Video Images, Inc., participating institutions are able to purchase top quality BT and CLI CODECs, MCUs, peripheral equipment, room design packages and maintenance programs tailored specifically to the instructional needs of midwestern higher education.

The VPN and Interactive Video Programs seek to promote and facilitate high quality communications technology in support of educational exchanges among midwestern colleges and universities. Future initiatives that focus on the programmatic aspects of electronic educational exchanges are presently under consideration.

Student Exchange Working with state higher education governing boards in the member states, the Commission has developed a participation agreement for a regional student exchange program.

The **Midwest Student Exchange Program (MSEP)** is an arrangement among interested MHEC member states through which states may list undergraduate and graduate programs (including professional programs) or institutions in which they are prepared to enroll students from other MHEC states, within specified numbers if desired, at a reduced proportion of the institution's regular tuition charge.

The program, involving reciprocal reduction of tuition by the participating states, expands educational opportunities available to students and facilitates more efficient use of academic resources . At a time when conservation of resources and avoidance of needless duplication are of concern in all states, reciprocal arrangements provide a tool for use in academic planning.

Risk Management: The Risk Management Program was undertaken by the Commission and its Risk Management Committee in recognition of the loss prevention and control problems that confront today's colleges and universities. The Committee is comprised of college and university risk management officers from all sectors of higher education. Its goals are to facilitate the development of mechanisms to improve physical asset and human resource protection, risk management services, and research and information exchange for the mutual benefit of participating institutions, systems and consortia. The firm of Johnson & Higgins, Inc. has been retained as program administrator on behalf of MHEC and the Risk Management Committee. The Commission, in cooperation with higher education and the insurance industry, is developing a family of insurance offerings with exceptionally broad coverage, reduced premium costs, and improved loss control and asset protection services. The first insurance offering of the Commission is the **MHEC Master Property Program**. The program is underwritten by the Allendale Company through a partnership alliance with MHEC. Higher education properties valued at more $13,000,000,000 are presently covered under the provisions of this program. Future insurance initiatives are being considered.

The Risk Management Committee is dedicated to facilitating information exchange to support the work of risk management and loss control officers at midwestern institutions of higher education. It seeks to compliment and support the efforts of regional and national associations of risk managers and business officers in sponsoring symposia, research bulletins, industry/higher education round tables, and related activities for these purposes.

Minority Faculty Development: The Commission, in cooperation with the St. Paul Companies and the McKnight Foundation, has undertaken a regional planning project with the intended goal of increasing the number of tenure track minority faculty in under-represented academic disciplines, in midwestern higher education. This planning initiative addresses three fundamental questions: What is the extent of underrepresentation in midwestern higher education? What are the underlying causes or contributing factors of underrepresentation? and What kinds of strategies might be employed to increase minority

faculty participation in higher education? The Commission hopes to develop a regional program based upon the findings of this planning initiative.

Women in Higher Education: The Commission, through a grant from the St. Paul Companies, is examining the need for, and feasibility of a regional initiative to encourage quality work experience and advancement of women in midwestern higher education. The Commission hopes to develop a regional proposal on the advancement of women in higher education that identifies and encourages successful institutional practices that eliminate gender bias, produce quality work experiences and promote career retention.

Academic Scheduling Software: The Academic Scheduling and Management Software Project was undertaken by the Commission in response to requests received from several smaller institutions throughout the region. The purpose of this project is to develop an affordable software solution to the academic and facilities scheduling problems faced by small and medium sized colleges and universities in member states. It is intended primarily to benefit the 432 college, university, community and technical college campuses with less than 10,000 students. The Academic Scheduling Committee comprised of institutional officers from all sectors of higher education was established to guide the development of this initiative. The desired outcome is a needs responsive, low cost scheduling software package that enables institutions to achieve administrative efficiencies by automating the patterned, information intensive processes of academic and facilities scheduling, thereby conserving time and resources. A search is underway for a reputable and responsible software provider to administer this project. It is anticipated that plans will be completed, and the project will be successfully implemented in 1995.

Academic Position Network: In December 1994, the Commission and the William C. Norris Institute established a joint planning project to facilitate further development and refinement of the Norris Institute's Academic Position Network to serve midwestern higher education. The Network is an Internet based announcement service for posting all types of faculty, staff and administrative positions. It is accessible through World Wide Web and is networked through the University of Minnesota Gopher software system. Access is free to higher education Internet users world wide. With its early success, the Network has demonstrated its value as a communications mechanism to benefit higher education. There are numerous communication and cost savings advantages to institutional participation.

The Norris Institute and MHEC are undertaking several planning tasks to enable the Network to realize its full potential in benefiting higher education. A standard listings

format flexible enough to meet a variety of institutional applications is being developed. Parameters regarding the optimal scope of services, and guidelines for maintaining the currency and integrity of listings are also being developed. Additional considerations include new institutional applications appropriate to the Network technology, and strategies to assure long term cost efficiency of network use.

Future Directions: The Commission constantly seeks feedback from institutional leaders regarding future directions that may prove beneficial to the various institutions and sectors of higher education in member states. A variety of suggestions for future program development have been submitted. These include:

Cost Savings Initiatives:

- Library and software purchasing initiatives
- Activities to reduce energy costs.
- Cooperative purchasing initiatives

Faculty and Student Access:

- Cooperative international degree studies
- Regional career placement information clearinghouse

Policy Analysis and Research:

- Midwestern higher education database and information clearinghouse
- Studies of the costs, benefits, and outcomes in midwestern higher education

Learning Outreach:

- Interactive communications networking
- Region wide demonstrations and knowledge sharing on distance learning applications

Industry-higher education innovation:

- Corporate alliances to improve programs and services available to higher education in member states.
- Regional cooperation to support technological advancements in higher education.

The following pages provide additional information regarding the Commission and its activities. Included are program progress reports presented at the December 1994 Commission meeting, a list of Commissioners, the MHEC Compact Statute, and a commentary on other interstate compact arrangements throughout the United States. If you would like further information, please write or call the Commission office

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The Midwestern Regional Higher Education

COMPACT

Entered into by and between the States signatory hereto, to advance higher education through interstate cooperation to meet the needs of the Midwestern Region of the United States of America.

ARTICLE I. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Midwestern Higher Education Compact shall be to provide greater higher education opportunities and services in the Midwestern region, with the aim of furthering regional access to, research in and choice of higher education for the citizens residing in the several states which are parties to this Compact.

ARTICLE II. THE COMMISSION

The compacting states hereby create the Midwestern Higher Education Commission, hereinafter called the Commission. The Commission shall be a body corporate of each compacting state. The Commission shall have all the responsibilities, powers and duties set forth herein, including the power to sue and be sued, and such additional powers as may be conferred upon it by subsequent action of the respective legislatures of the compacting states in accordance with the terms of this Compact.

The Commission shall consist of five resident members of each state as follows: the governor or the governor's designee who shall serve during the tenure of office of the governor; 2 legislators, one from each house (except Nebraska, which may appoint two legislators from its Unicameral Legislature), who shall serve two-year terms and be appointed by the appropriate appointing authority in each house of the legislature; and two other at-large members, at least one of whom shall be selected from the field of higher education. The at-large members shall be appointed in a manner provided by the laws of the appointing state. One of the two at-large members initially appointed in each state shall serve a two-year term. The other, and any regularly appointed successor to either at-large member, shall serve a four-year term. All vacancies shall be filled in accordance with the laws of the appointing states. Any commissioner appointed to fill a vacancy shall serve until the end of the incomplete term.

The Commission shall select annually, from among its members, a chairperson, a vice chairperson and a treasurer.

The Commission shall appoint an executive director who shall serve at its pleasure and who shall act as secretary to the Commission. The treasurer, the executive director and such other personnel as the

the Commission may determine, shall be bonded in such amounts as the Commission may require.

The Commission shall meet at least once each calendar year. The chairperson may call additional meetings and upon the request of a majority of the Commission members of three or more compacting states, shall call additional meetings. Public notice shall be given of all meetings and meetings shall be open to the public.

Each compacting state represented at any meeting of the Commission is entitled to one vote. A majority of the compacting states shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, unless a larger quorum is required by the bylaws of the Commission.

ARTICLE III. POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE COMMISSION

The Commission shall adopt a seal and suitable bylaws governing its management and operations.

Irrespective of the civil service, personnel or other merit system laws of any of the compacting states, the Commission in its bylaws shall provide for the personnel policies and programs of the Compact.

The Commission shall submit a budget to the governor and legislature of each compacting state at such time and for such period as may be required. The budget shall contain specific recommendations of the amount or amounts to be appropriated by each of the compacting states.

The Commission shall report annually to the legislatures and governors of the compacting states, to the Midwestern Governors' Conference and to the Midwestern Legislative Conference of the Council of State Governments concerning the activities of the Commission during the preceding year. Such reports shall also embody any recommendations that may have been adopted by the Commission.

The Commission may borrow, accept, or contract for the services of personnel from any state or the United States or any subdivision or agency thereof, from any interstate agency, or from any institution, foundation, person, firm or corporation.

The Commission may accept for any of its purposes and functions under the Compact any and all donations and grants of money, equipment, supplies, materials and services (conditional or otherwise) from any state or the United States or any subdivision or agency thereof, or interstate agency, or from any institution, foundation, person, firm, or corporation, and may receive, utilize and dispose of the same.

The Commission may enter into agreements with any other interstate education organizations or agencies and with higher education institutions located in non-member states and with any of the various states of these United States to provide adequate programs and citizens of the respective services in higher education for the citizens of the respective compacting states. The Commission shall, after

negotiations with interested institutions and interstate organizations or agencies, determine the cost of providing the programs and services in higher education for use of these agreements.

The Commission may establish and maintain offices, which shall be located within one or more of the compacting states.

The Commission may establish committees and hire staff as it deems necessary for the carrying out of its functions.

The Commission may provide for actual and necessary expenses for attendance of its members at official meetings of the Commission or its designated committees.

ARTICLE IV. ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMISSION

The Commission shall collect data on the long-range effects of the Compact on higher education. By the end of the fourth year from the effective date of the Compact and every two years thereafter, the Commission shall review its accomplishments and make recommendations to the governors and legislatures of the compacting states on the continuance of the compact.

The Commission shall study issues in higher education of particular concern to the Midwestern region. The Commission shall also study the needs for higher education programs and services in compacting states and the resources for meeting such needs. The Commission shall from time to time prepare reports on such research for presentation to the governors and legislatures of the compacting states and other interested parties. In conducting such studies, the Commission may confer with any national or regional planning body. The Commission may draft and recommend to the governors and legislatures of the various compacting states suggested legislation dealing with problems of higher education.

The Commission shall study the need for provision of adequate programs and services in higher education, such as undergraduate, graduate or professional student exchanges in the region. If a need for exchange in a field is apparent, the Commission may enter into such agreements with any higher education institution and with any of the compacting states to provide programs and services in higher education for the citizens of the respective compacting states. The Commission shall, after negotiations with interested institutions and the compacting states, determine the costs of providing the programs and services in higher education for use in its agreements. The contracting states shall contribute the funds not otherwise provided, as determined by the Commission, for carrying out the agreements. The Commission may also serve as the administrative and fiscal agent in carrying out agreements for higher educations programs and services.

The Commission shall serve as a clearinghouse on information regarding higher education activities among institutions and agencies.

In addition to the activities of the Commission previously noted, the Commission may provide services and research in other areas of regional concern.

ARTICLE V. FINANCE

The monies necessary to finance the general operations of the Commission not otherwise provided for in carrying forth its duties, responsibilities and powers as stated herein shall be appropriated to the Commission by the compacting states, when authorized by the respective legislatures by equal apportionment among the compacting states.

The Commission shall not incur any obligations of any kind prior to the making of appropriations adequate to meet the same; nor shall the Commission pledge the credit of any of the compacting states, except by and with the authority of the compacting state.

The Commission shall keep accurate accounts of all receipts and disbursements. The receipts and disbursements of the Commission shall be subject to the audit and accounting procedures established under its bylaws. However, all receipts and disbursements of funds handled by the Commission shall be audited yearly by a certified or licensed public accountant and the report of the audit shall be included in and become part of the annual report of the Commission.

The accounts of the Commission shall be open at any reasonable time for inspection by duly authorized representatives of the compacting states and persons authorized by the Commission.

ARTICLE VI. ELIGIBLE PARTIES AND ENTRY INTO FORCE

The states of Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota and Wisconsin shall be eligible to become party to this Compact. Additional states will be eligible if approved by a majority of the compacting states.

As to any eligible party state, this Compact shall become effective when its legislature shall have enacted the same into law; provided that it shall not become initially effective until enacted into law by five states prior to the 31st day of December 1995.

Amendments to the Compact shall become effective upon their enactment by the legislatures of all compacting states.

ARTICLE VII. WITHDRAWAL, DEFAULT AND TERMINATION

Any compacting state may withdraw from this Compact by enacting a statute repealing the Compact, but such withdrawal shall not become effective until two years after the enactment of such statute. A withdrawing state shall be liable for any obligations which it may have incurred on account of its party status up to the effective date of withdrawal, except that if the withdrawing state has specifically undertaken or committed itself to any performance of an obligation

extending beyond the effective date of withdrawal, it shall remain liable to the extent of such obligation.

If any compacting state shall at any time default in the per-formance of any of its obligations, assumed or imposed, in accordance with the provisions of this Compact, all rights, privileges and benefits conferred by this Compact or agreements hereunder shall be suspended from the effective date of such default as fixed by the Commission, and the Commission shall stipulate the conditions and maximum time for compliance under which the defaulting state may resume its regular status. Unless such default shall be remedied under the stipulations and within the time period set forth by the Commission, this Compact may be terminated with respect to such defaulting state by affirmative vote of a majority of the other member states. Any such defaulting state may be reinstated by performing all acts and obligations as stipulated by the Commission.

ARTICLE VIII. SEVERABILITY AND CONSTRUCTION

The provisions of this Compact entered into hereunder shall be severable and if any phrase, clause, sentence or provision of this compact is declared to be contrary to the constitution of any compacting state or of the United States of the applicability thereof to any government, agency, person or circumstance is held invalid, the validity of the remainder of this Compact and the applicability thereof to any government, agency, person or circumstance shall not be affected thereby. If this Compact entered into hereunder shall be held contrary to the constitution of any compacting state, the Compact shall remain in full force and effect as to the remaining states and in full force and effect as to the state affected as to all severable matters. The provisions of this Compact entered into pursuant hereto shall be liberally construed to effectuate the purposes thereof.

This compact is now in full force and effect, having been approved by the Governors and Legislatures of more than five of the eligible states.

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State of Illinois
By Jim Edgar
August 20, 1991

State of Kansas
By Michael Hayden
April 28, 1990

State of Michigan
By James A. Blanchard
July 24, 1990

State of Minnesota
By Rudolph Perpich
April 26, 1990

State of Missouri
By John D. Ashcroft
May 9, 1990

State of Nebraska
By Ben Nelson
June 5, 1991

State of Ohio
By Richard F. Celeste
January 9, 1991

State of Wisconsin
By Tommy Thompson
April 18, 1994

SOME FACTS ABOUT EDUCATION COMPACTS

There are three education compacts--The Southern Regional Education Compact, The Western Regional Education Compact and The New England Education Compact.

All three compacts operate through regional agencies called boards or commissions. Fifteen states are represented on the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB): Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia. Six states are represented on the New England Board of Higher Education (NEBHE): Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont. Fifteen states are represented on the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE): Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming; North Dakota and South Dakota have been accorded affiliate status through amendment to the WICHE Bylaws.

The basic charters of all three agencies are similar. They specify two primary functions: (1) fact-finding and research into the needs and problems of higher education within the region; and (2) developing and administering interstate or interinstitutional arrangements to provide adequate facilities and services for graduate, professional, technical and undergraduate education. By implication, each agency is also charged with searching for new methods of interinstitutional and interstate cooperation in higher education.

Legally, politically, and financially, the interstate education agencies are creatures of the compacting states. They were originally authorized by the legislatures of the member states; they received their basic financial support from the states; and they must depend upon the states for their continued existence. Moreover, none of the agencies has any authority or control over the educational policy of individual states or institutions. Lacking coercive power, they must work by building consensus among affected groups, using the method of persuasion to secure agreement among states and institutions on mutually advantageous projects.

In each compact agency, major responsibility for policy-making is vested in a board or commission consisting of representatives of the member states. The composition of this body varies from agency to agency. The Southern compact specifies that board membership shall consist of the governor of each member state and four other persons appointed by him, at least one of whom must be a state legislator and one an educator. The Western Interstate Commission consists of three representatives from each of the member states, who are appointed by the governors. At least one of the commissioners from each state must be an educator engaged in the field of higher education. The New England compact specifies that the board shall consist of three members from each state, chosen in the manner and for the terms provided by law of each state joining the compact. In practice, the governors appoint the members of the board, but in four states -- Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, and Connecticut--the president of the state university is an ex-officio member.

Interstate reciprocity and resource sharing in postsecondary education on a regional basis are important means through which states meet some of their educational needs and deal effectively with rapidly changing conditions. Postsecondary education in the coming decades will be shaped, on the one hand, by the need for states to increase the effectiveness of educational expenditures, and on the other, by the need to meet educational requirements of an increasingly complex economy and society. Regional resource sharing helps meet both of these needs. Effectiveness can be enhanced both by sharing experiences and by sharing actual resources or facilities when duplication is unnecessary and costly. Similarly, student opportunities, particularly but not exclusively in specialized fields and more technical programs, can be enhanced by limiting the barriers imposed by state boundaries and providing access and program options on a regional basis. Such reciprocity facilitates more efficient use of underutilized resources, either at institution or program level. Finally, at a time when there is increased interest in strengthening coordination and planning at the state level (to avoid unnecessary duplication) reciprocal arrangements provide an additional tool available for use in institutional and state level planning.

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